

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Previously Presented): A heating muffle for a muffle kiln for the production of a dental ceramic product containing titanium, which comprises a hollow unit, which is provided for the uptake of the ceramic product with at least one opening (11) and has completely heatable inner walls, and which can form together with a pedestal a firing chamber in which the ceramic product is heated by the inner walls, is hereby characterized in that the hollow unit comprises at least one spirally bent tube (16) containing a heat conductor (18) for a uniform heat transfer to the product and in order to avoid temperature gradients.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): The heating muffle according to claim 1, further characterized in that the opening (11) of the hollow unit is aligned toward the bottom in the operating position and can act together with a pedestal to form the firing chamber after taking up the ceramic product.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): The heating muffle according to claim 1 or 2, further characterized in that the hollow unit is comprised of a cylinder sealed on one end with a cylinder cover (12; 12').

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The heating muffle according to claim 3, further characterized in that the cylinder cover is flat (12) or arched (12').

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): The heating muffle according to one of claims 1 or 2, further characterized in that the hollow unit is essentially hemispherically shaped or essentially spherically shaped.

Claims 6 – 14 (Cancelled)